

Message Text

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ACTION AF-08

INFO OCT-01 EUR-12 NEA-10 ISO-00 EB-07 COME-00 TRSE-00

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FM AMEMBASSY KHARTOUM

TO SECSTATE WASHDC 3103

INFO AMEMBASSY ADDIS ABABA

AMEMBASSY BANGUI

AMEMBASSY CAIRO

AMEMBASSY JIDDA

AMEMBASSY KINSHASA

AMEMBASSY KUWAIT

AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

AMEMBASSY NAIROBI

AMEMBASSY NDJAMENA

AMEMBASSY TRIPOLI

C O N F I D E N T I A L KHARTOUM 3586

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PFOR, PINT, EGEN, EAID, SU

SUBJECT: SITUATION IN SUDAN - FALL 1976

REF: A. KHARTOUM 2749, B. KHARTOUM 2750

SUMMARY: FOLLOWING TENSE POST COUP ATTEMPT PERIOD PAST JULY - SEPTEMBER, SUDANESE LIFE RETURNED TO NORMAL DURING PAST TEN WEEKS. GOS ACTIVITY DOMINATED BY HIGHLY PUBLICIZED MEETINGS RELATED TO ECONOMIC DEVELOPMENT AND AMBITIOUS SIX-YEAR PLAN, BUT HEIGHTENED CONCERN OVER INTERNAL SECURITY REMAINED. VISIT BY SAUDI KING KHALID AND HIGH LEVEL MEETINGS WITH EGYPTIANS INCLUDING ONE AT PRIME MINISTER LEVEL IN CAIRO DRAMATIZED INCREASING EGYPT-SAUDI COORDINATION WITH SUDAN. INITIAL TANGIBLE STEPS BY USG IN RENEWED ECONOMIC AND SECURITY ASSISTANCE AREAS WERE WELCOMED BY GOS. FOCUS OVER NEXT SEVERAL WEEKS LIKELY BE ON DOMESTIC POLITICS IN PREPARATION FOR SECOND TRIENNIAL SSU CONFERENCE IN
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JANUARY AND ORCHESTRATION BY REGIME OF NIMEIRI'S NOMINATION

FOR SECOND PRESIDENTIAL TERM TO BEGIN NEXT FALL. END SUMMARY.

1. SINCE REFTELS SENT LAST SEPTEMBER, LIFE HAS RETURNED TO NORMAL IN SUDAN FOLLOWING TENSE WEEKS IN WAKE EARLY JULY COUP ATTEMPT. GOS HAS BEEN BUSY PUTTING FINISHING TOUCHES ON SIX-YEAR DEVELOPMENT PLAN AND PARTICIPATING IN IMPORTANT MEETINGS WITH POTENTIAL DONORS. ARAB AUTHORITY FOR AGRICULTURAL INVESTMENT AND DEVELOPMENT (AAAID), WHICH EXPECTED BECOME LARGEST SINGLE SOURCE FOREIGN ASSISTANCE, HELD INITIAL PLEDGING SESSION HERE IN LATE OCTOBER AND IS EXPECTED BECOME OPERATIONAL IN JANUARY. VISIT SAUDI KING KHALID AT END OCTOBER WAS, FROM GOS POINT OF VIEW, EVIDENT SUCCESS. ALTHOUGH DETAILS LACKING, EVIDENCE SUGGESTS SAG AGREED AT LEAST IN PRINCIPLE PROVIDE BADLY NEEDED FOREIGN EXCHANGE AND MILITARY ASSISTANCE. NIMEIRI REPORTEDLY MET PRIVATELY FOR TWO HOURS WITH KHALID AGAIN IN MECCA IN EARLY DECEMBER.

2. PRINCIPAL AID DONORS INCLUDING US MET IN PARIS EARLY NOVEMBER TO REVIEW SUDANESE ECONOMY AND TO CONSIDER WAYS TO ASSIST SUDAN. URING AUTUMN PERIOD SUBSTANTIAL NEW ECONOMIC ASSISTANCE AGREEMENTS BY EEC, WORLD FOOD PROGRAM, CANADA, NETHERLANDS, DENMARK AND GERMANY WERE ANNOUNCED OR SIGNED. NEVERTHELESS, THERE WAS DISAPPOINTMENT THAT AAAID AND PARIS MEETINGS DID NOT RESULT IN MORE CONCRETE RESULTS. GOS CONTINUES GRAPPLE WITH INCREASINGLY DIFFICULT SHORT-TERM BALANCE OF PAYMENTS PROBLEMS. POPULAR GRUMBLING OVER HIGH PRICES AND SHORTAGES HAS FORCED GOS IN RECENT WEEKS CANDIDLY TO ADMIT PROBLEMS EXIST AND TO PROMISE REMEDIAL ACTION.

3. IN ADDITION TO PERSISTENT ECONOMIC PROBLEMS GOS REMAINS ACUTELY CONCERNED OVER NEW THREATS TO INTERNAL SECURITY. SAND-BAGGED WATCH TOWERS WITH FLOOD LIGHTS HAVE APPEARED AROUND GENERAL MILITARY HEADQUARTERS (WHERE NIMEIRI LIVES) AND BRIDGES GUARDED NIGHTLY BY ARMED PATROLS. GOS CLOSELY MONITORING SITUATION IN WEST SUDAN WHICH RECEIVING CLOSE POLITICAL ATTENTION BY SENIOR GOS AND SSU OFFICIALS IN SERIES HIGH-LEVEL VISITS BOTH DARFUR AND DORDOFAN. IN CONTRAST, GOS WAS INSENSITIVE TO NEEDS OF CONFIDENTIAL

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SOUTHERN REGION DURING HEALTH CRISIS WHICH FOLLOWED NEWS OF OUTBREAK LATE SEPTEMBER OF HIGHLY DANGEROUS NEW VIRAL DISEASE IN WESTERN EQUATORIA PROVINCE. SUMMARY, HARSH QUARANTINE OF ENTIRE SOUTHERN REGION FOR MOST OF PERIOD AND MINIMAL SUPPORT TO REGIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITIES FROM KHARTOUM ERODED POPULAR SUPPORT TO REGIONAL HEALTH AUTHORITIES FROM KHARTOUM ERODED POPULAR SUPPORT FOR GOS AND SOUTHERN REGIONAL LEADERS.

4. SPECULATION RE NEXT ATTEMPT UNSEAT NIMEIRI PERSISTS. GOS CAREFULLY WATCHING FOR SIGNS THAT COMMUNISTS BACKED BY MOSCOW MAY INTENSIFY OPPOSITION. SAUDI SUPPORT NOTED ABOVE, AND HIGHLY PUBLICIZED MILITARY AND POLITICAL MEETINGS WITH EGYPTIAN LEADERS WERE NO DOUBT DESIGNED IN PART PROVIDE ADDITIONAL SUPPORT TO REGIME. PRIMIN RASHID TAHER AL-BAKR LED HIGH LEVEL GOS DELEGATION TO CAIRO FOR WIDE-RANGING TALKS WITH GOE COUNTERPARTS IN NOVEMBER. SENIOR OFFICIALS PRIVATELY WORRIED OVER SITUATION IN ETHIOPIA, UGANDA, CAR AND CHAD WHERE THEY THINK LIBYANS SEEKING EXPAND THEIR INFLUENCE AT EXPENSE SUDAN.

5. NIMEIRI REGIME, THEREFORE, HAS FULL PLATE ECONOMIC AND SECURITY PROBLEMS. ON OTHER HAND RELATIONS WITH SAUDIS AND EGYPTIANS ARE GOOD AND NIMEIRI CAN ALSO POINT TO RATHER SOLID, PRACTICAL SUPPORT FROM OTHER MONIED ARAB STATES, DEVELOPED COUNTRIES AND INTERNATIONAL AGENCIES. IN THIS CONNECTION, GOS AND PUBLIC WELCOME PRESENT WARM RELATIONS WITH U.S. DURING PAST SEVERAL WEEKS WE HAVE BEEN ABLE INFORM GOS OF NUMBER TANGIBLE, POSITIVE STEPS WE TAKING IN ECONOMIC AND SECURITY AREAS TO ASSIST SUDAN. THIS HAS ALLAYED FEARS VOICED BY SEVERAL SUDANESE LEADERS LATE LAST SUMMER THAT, FOLLOWING NORMALIZATION OF RELATIONS, USG HOLDING BACK ON DEVELOPMENT FRUITFUL TIES. AT SAME TIME GOS WITH NIMEIRI TAKING LEAD HAS BECOME OPENLY DISTRUSTFUL AND CRITICAL OF USSR WITH RESULTANT DETERIORATION IN RELATIONS.

6. THOUGH SUDAN FACED WITH MANY PROBLEMS, GOS CONTINUES HAVE SIGNIFICANT SUPPORT FROM ITS MANY FRIENDS. NIMEIRI CAN BE EXPECTED STRESS THIS THEME OVER NEXT SEVERAL WEEKS IN HIGHLY POLITICAL RUN-UP FOR JANUARY SSU TRIENNIAL CONFERENCE. NIMEIRI WILL BE NOMINATED FOR SECOND TERM AS PRESIDENT
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WHICH BEGINS NEXT FALL. HE MADE HIS WILLINGNESS SERVE CONTINGENT ON 100 PERCENT BACKING OF ARMY, WHICH HE RECEIVED WITH GREAT FANFARE. PLEDGES OF SUPPORT FROM OTHER IMPORTANT ELEMENTS OF REGIME'S "ESTABLISHMENT" HAVE SIMILARLY BEEN GIVEN CONSIDERABLE PUBLICITY.

7. AS IN PAST, HOWEVER, NIMEIRI'S BASE OF SUPPORT REMAINS NARROW. HE FACES NAGGING BALANCE OF PAYMENTS PROBLEMS AND MUST REMAIN VIGILANT AS ITS ENEMIES WAIT FOR SOME NEW OPPORTUNITY TO TRY TOPPLE THIS SEVEN-YEAR OLD REGIME.
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